

Professor C. H. G. Macafee presented the latest figures for the treatment of placenta prævia in the Royal Maternity Hospital and in private practice. During the years 1937-1949 there were 275 cases. There were two maternal deaths, a mortality rate of 0.73 per cent. The foetal mortality was 20.4 per cent., and, if deaths from foetal abnormalities were excluded, the corrected figure was 17.1 per cent. These figures were compared with those of the Royal Maternity Hospital in 1932-1936. In these years there were seventy-six cases, with a maternal mortality of 2.6 per cent. and a foetal mortality of 51.3 per cent. The speaker considered that the results vindicated the use of conservative treatment in placenta prævia. Prematurity, with its associated foetal mortality, had been reduced without increasing the maternal risk. He emphasised, however, that conservative treatment must be employed intelligently and that each case required consideration by a senior obstetrician.

Dr. A. S. Majury read a paper entitled "Pregnancy Complicated by Diabetes Mellitus." He reviewed fifty-four pregnancies occurring in thirty-nine diabetic patients in the Royal Maternity Hospital during 1938-1948. This represented an incidence of 1 in 313 pregnancies. Hydramnios occurred in 26 per cent. of the cases, while pre-eclamptic toxæmia occurred in 52 per cent. Coma and eclampsia were the principal hazards for the diabetic mother and caused three deaths, a mortality of 5.5 per cent. In spite of insulin therapy, the foetal mortality remained high, being 42.6 per cent. The speaker reviewed the possible causes, namely, ketosis and toxæmia in the mother, dystocia, with birth injury, and maternal hormonal imbalance. He considered that, as suggested by Priscilla White, oestrogen and progesterone deficiency might be the most important factor, although no patient in the series received oestrogen and progesterone therapy. He found that cæsarean section was performed nineteen times, resulting in a healthy child on eighteen occasions, and made a plea for more frequent use of this method of delivery in diabetic patients.

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## REVIEW

**PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE.** By Curran and Guttman. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 10s. 6d.

THE third edition of this book has retained the general characteristics of its predecessors. Despite the strong desire of the authors that this book should not grow in size, it has been necessary to expand it owing to the rapid advances made in psychiatry in the past few years.

The chapter on treatment has been re-written and brought up to date, but it has been confined wisely to a brief outline of the various methods in use, as detailed technique can be obtained from special articles devoted to these methods. More space has been allotted to obsessional states and hysterical reactions, with a fuller account of treatment of these difficult and refractory disorders. The chapter on Psychiatric Aspects of Head Injury is concise and clear, with a full understanding of the difficulties arising in the diagnosis and treatment of the various syndromes brought about by trauma.

Altogether, this book is an excellent introduction to psychological medicine, written from a clinical point of view, and is a most suitable text-book for medical students and for medical practitioners interested in psychiatry.

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